

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action dated August 29, 2006.

Claims 3, 4, 10, 13, 14, 17, 23, 27, 28, and 32 are amended, claims 1, 2, 5-9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19-22, 25, 26, 30, 31, and 33-36 were previously canceled, and no claims are added; as a result, claims 3, 4, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 23, 24, 27-29, and 32 remain pending in this application.

Claims 3, 4, 10, 13, 14, 17, 23, 27, 28, and 32 are amended to more fully recite the claimed subject matter. Applicant submits that the amendments are supported throughout the specification, including, for example, the portion at page 4, line 27 to page 5, line 9.

§102 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 3, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 23, and 24 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Stockstad (U.S. 6,366,167 B1).

Notwithstanding the amendment of claims 3, 10, 13, 14, 17, and 23, Applicant respectfully submits that Stockstad does not anticipate the claimed subject matter. For example, Applicant is unable to find, in Stockstad, a disclosure of operation in a saturation mode as recited in each of the amended claims. In particular, the PMOS pair of transistors in Stockstad do not appear to operate in a saturation mode. Furthermore, the gates of the pair of transistors in Stockstad appear to be tied to ground. For at least these reasons, it appears that Stockstad does not anticipate the claimed subject matter. Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 18 and 24 depend from independent claims 17 and 23, respectfully. Each of claims 18 and 24 recite subject matter beyond that of the base claims and are thus believed to be allowable for at least the reasons noted above.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 3, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 23, and 24.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 4, 27-29, and 32 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stockstad (U.S. 6,366,167 B1) in view of Rotzoll (U.S. 5,737,035).

Notwithstanding the amendment of claims 4, 27, 28, and 32, Applicant respectfully submits that the proposed combination of Stockstad and Rotzoll does not render the claimed subject matter obvious. For example, Applicant submits that the proposed combination does not appear to teach or suggest the claimed subject matter. In particular, Applicant is unable to find, in the proposed combination, a teaching or suggestion of operation in a saturation mode, as recited in the claims.

Dependent claim 29 depends from independent claim 28 and recites subject matter beyond that of the base claim. Claim 29 is believed to be in condition for allowance for at least the reasons noted above.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 4, 27-29, and 32.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney ((612) 373-6911) to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

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Date

November 29, 2006

By



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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being filed using the USPTO's electronic filing system EFS-Web, and is addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 29th day of November 2006.

Name

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Signature

